

February 23, 2011

The following is written testimony in favor of **Raised House Bill No. 6337, AN ACT CLARIFYING THE SCOPE OF SOLAR ELECTRICITY WORK** *which is intended to clarify the scope of solar electricity work permitted by PV-1 licensed contractors.*

I'm the owner of the Connecticut based company Litchfield Hills Solar LLC, and have completed over eighty successful PV solar installs in the state. I have a degree in Electrical Engineering and hold both PV-1 and HIC licenses in Connecticut.

I support this bill for the following three reasons:

Safety: PV licensed installers know PV well. Requirements for a PV-1 license include at least 2 years of experience as a **solar** journeyperson, with solar specific training. The Connecticut test for a solar PV-1 license includes over twenty-nine solar specific questions, while that of the E-1 license has ten solar related questions at most. An electrician can get all ten solar specific questions wrong, and still receive their E-1 license. On more than four occasions, I've had to correct faulty PV electrical work performed by an E1 or E2 electrician, and I have yet to meet an E1 or E2 electrician in the field who hasn't asked me technical questions about the operation or connection of a PV system. An E1/E2 electrician is not required to have any solar specific continuing education hours, while a PV is required to have a minimum of eight hours annually. Since solar technology is a complex, rapidly changing, and expanding field, it is crucial to keep it a specialized arena of expertise.

Affordability: The current requirement that an E1 contractor pull the necessary permit and complete a solar install greatly increases the cost and complexity of any PV installation. This extra expense burdens the consumer, which in turn, stifles potential PV market growth in the state. By enabling PV licensed contractors to fully complete an installation, solar work is kept affordable and efficient, as well as performed by highly trained specialists.

Work Force: The PV installation market has been experiencing rapid growth globally, nationally, and at the state level. By allowing PV licensed contractors to install and connect solar PV systems, the state of Connecticut enables expansion in this important industry. It will be easier to train and license PV specialists than E1/E2 contractors to meet these demands.

By passing Bill No. 6337, the state of Connecticut will empower PV license holders to perform the specialized work for which they were trained.

Sincerely,



James A. LaPorta
BSEE, PV-1